

GRADE LEVELS: 9-12

Key Objectives	Key Vocabulary
Students will draw a three page comic book tracing the anthropocene extinction of one animal.	Anthropocene extinction Equilibrium Charismatic megafauna
Artworks Used	Materials
Benjamin's Emblem, Walton Ford Student choice of art in <i>Un/Natural Selections</i>	Comic Template Silent Spring Excerpt Graphic Organizer Pencils (graphite, #2)

TIME	ACTIVITY	SCRIPT
2 min	Introduce Exhibit	Welcome to <i>Un/Natural Selections</i> . This exhibit is made up of work by contemporary artists (most of whom are still alive) about animals today and the challenges they face. Today, we are going to learn about those challenges and think about what the animals need to survive. Then, we're going to make comics about some of the animals and environmental science concepts you see here today.



5 min Charismatic Megafauna Scavenger Hunt

Charismatic megafauna are defined as animals who have widespread popular appeal to the public, and, as such, are useful mascots for environmental conservationism (whales, gorillas, giant pandas, etc).

Find one piece of art that features charismatic megafauna and one piece that features <u>UN</u>charismatic megafauna (an animal that would likely not be viewed as cute/cuddly/or popular with the public, but is still essential to the environment).

- Look at the piece of art you feel is a good example of charismatic megafauna. Why might the artist have chosen this animal? What argument do they seem to be making about environmental conservation?
- Look at the piece of art you feel is an example of <u>UN</u>charismatic megafauna. Why might the artist have used this animal? What argument do they seem to be making about environmental conservation?

8 min Group Art Analysis

Walton Ford uses text and illustrations to make an argument about **anthropocene extinction** (extinction caused by humans).

Let's look at *Benjamin's Emblem* by Walton Ford. In it, we see a turkey crushing a now-extinct Carolina Parakeet with excerpts from Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* behind it. For five minutes, we will discuss themes about nationalism and extinction in this work:

Turn and talk: With a neighbor, answer the following question: What is the tone of the painting? Use evidence in your response.

Small group: In groups of 4, answer the following question: Why might the artist allude to Benjamin Franklin?

Large group: Considering that many have heard a popular myth that Franklin wanted a turkey to be the national symbol, what argument might the artist be making about America's impact on the environment?



10 min Extinction Scavenger Hunt

Up until the 19th century, scientists did not believe that animals could go extinct. Many believed that divine power (God) would not allow for animals to go extinct and that animal populations naturally worked towards **equilibrium**: producing enough offspring to take the place of the dead. We now know this is untrue. However, the concept of extinction is a relatively new one.

Go through the exhibit and search for two works of art that touch on the topic of extinction. What argument does the artist seem to be making about the role humans play in extinction? Compare and contrast them using the provided graphic organizer.

30 min Making Comics

Read the provided excerpt from Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. This book was a watershed text in the environmental movement, arguing that pesticides and DDT (an insecticide) were causing real and severe damage to animals and the environment. After reading, use the comic template to create a comic that incorporates text from Carson's work about **anthropocene extinction**. You may either make an illustration of Carson's work, or you can tell a different story about extinction that uses the words to illustrate your point in the style of Walton Ford.

Think about the following questions:

- What argument are you making about anthropocene extinction?
- What role do humans play in both the problem and potential solutions?

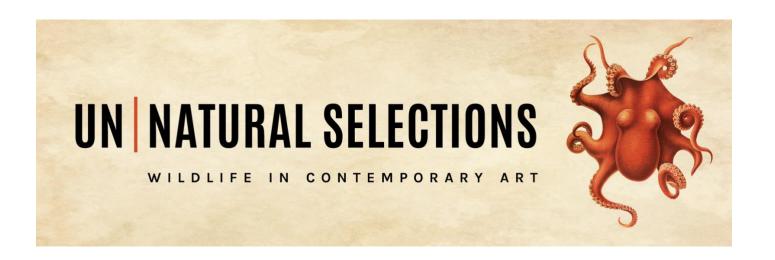
3 min Wrap-up

Share your comic with a partner. Briefly explain what story you're telling and how you incorporated Carson's words.

As you browse the gallery, think about the arguments the artists are making about **anthropocene extinction**. What responsibilities do humans have to be stewards to the environment? Are the works hopeful or pessimistic?

2 min Flex Time





GRADE LEVELS: 6-8

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Students will be able to draw a three panel comic about how invasive species enter an ecosystem based on short nonfiction reading.

Key Vocabulary

Symbiosis / Symbiotic
Invasive Species
Colonization
Eco-colonization

Artworks Used

Six Pack Colonialism, Julie Buffalohead

Works by Penelope Gottleib

Student choice of art in Un/Natural Selections

Materials

Comic Template

Printed copies of the articles (one per child)

Graphic Organizer

Pencils (graphite, #2)

Printed questions (optional)

2 min Introduce Welcome to <i>Un/Natural Selections</i> . This exhibit is made	
Exhibit work by contemporary artists (most of whom are still alive animals today and the challenges they face. Today, we are to learn about those challenges and think about what the animals need to survive. Then, we're going to make comic some of the animals and environmental science concept here today. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF	alive) about are going the mics about

5 min

Group Scavenger Hunt

Symbiosis describes how two animals get along in their shared habitat. Relationships can be *mutualistic* (both animals benefit, neither is harmed), *commensalistic* (one animal benefits, the other is neither harmed nor benefited), or *parasitic* (one animal benefits, the other is harmed).

Walk around the gallery and find a work of art with animals of different species interacting. Characterize the **symbiotic** relationship in the art. Is it mutualism? Commensalism? Parasitism?

10 min

Group Art Analysis

Look at Six Pack Colonialism by Julie Buffalohead. Colonization is a term for when people move to a new place where people already live, take over, and steal natural resources. Eco-colonization specifically examines how colonization negatively impacts the environment.

What is the relationship between animals and the Ponca tribe?

Who are the colonizers here? How do you know? In the painting, what argument do you think Buffalohead is making about Europeans' relationship with nature?

How would you describe colonialism's impact on the environment in the painting? Mutualism? Commensalism? Parasitism? Why?

5 min

Invasive Species Overview

Look at the three works by Penelope Gottlieb. An **invasive species** is any plant or animal that goes to a place it isn't from (usually introduced by humans) and causes harm to the natural environment.

Find a work of art that features an **invasive species**. What is the invasive species in the art? What harm is it causing?

Climate change is also allowing for **invasive species** to spread faster than before. Why might climate change make it easier for some animals to become invasive?

30 min

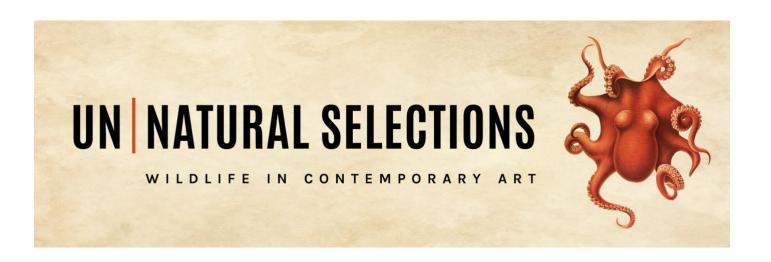
Making Comics

Using the list and template provided, make a one page comic about an **invasive species**. Where did it come from? Did humans



		introduce it? How does it cause harm to the environment and other species?
		OPTIONS: Rabbits (Australia), Lionfish (North America), Mongoose (Hawaii)
5 min	Wrap-up	Now let's have 2 volunteers share their comics. What did you draw? How did the invasive species arrive? What harm did it do?
		How do invasive species connect to eco-colonization ? What must humans do to prevent eco-colonization from happening?
3 min	Flex Time	





GRADE LEVELS: 3-5

Key Objectives	Key Vocabulary
Students will be able to draw a three panel comic about how climate change will impact a certain animal using either a realistic, abstract,	Climate change Indicator Species Realism
or surrealist style.	Abstract Surrealism

Artworks Used	Materials	
Cloned Penguin with PET Bottle,	Comic Template	
William Sweetlove	<u>Graphic Organizer</u>	
Student choice of art in <i>Un/Natural Selections</i>	Pencils (graphite, #2)	
	Printed questions (optional)	

TIME	ACTIVITY	SCRIPT
2 min	Introduce Exhibit	Welcome to <i>Un/Natural Selections</i> . This exhibit is made up of work by contemporary artists (most of whom are still alive) about animals today and the challenges they face. Today, we are going to learn about those challenges and think about what the animals need to survive. Then, we're going to make comics about some of the animals you see here today.



10 min Styles of Art Conversation

There are lots of different styles artists use to make their arguments. Today, we're going to look at three categories artists might use to make arguments:

Realism: Art that looks realistic. The artist tries to make the subject look as similar to the real thing and its natural surroundings as possible.

Abstract: Art that focuses on the "spirit" of the subject matter. It is not realistic and abstract artists frequently use shapes, unusual brush strokes, or unnatural colors to emphasize their arguments. Abstraction means changed from reality and doesn't look realistic.

Surrealism: This is art that is typically dream-like and appeals to how thoughts can often be confusing and complicated. It features subject matter in other-worldly or unrealistic situations.

Now work with a partner! Go through the exhibit and try to find one piece of art that matches each of those categories! Use the graphic organizer provided to write down your ideas and keep track of your thoughts.

5 min Group Art Analysis

This piece is called *Cloned Penguin with PET Bottle* by William Sweetlove. What style of art do you think this is? **Realism**? **Abstract**? **Surrealism**?

In recent years, penguins have seen their populations declining to the point that several species are at risk of becoming endangered. Penguins, like many birds, are **indicator species**. That means they can tell us a lot about how healthy an environment is. As oceans warm, the ice the penguins need to survive is melting.

The artist is making an argument here about **climate change**. What do you think the artist wants us to think about when it comes to **climate change**? There is no right or wrong answer! Turn and talk with a neighbor about your thoughts.



10 min Scavenger Hunt

For ten minutes, examine the works in *Un/Natural Selections*. Identify a work of art that you think contains a message about **climate change**. Look for symbols! Artists will often use fire, melting ice, and water to symbolize **climate change**. With a partner, discuss the two questions for the work of art you pick:

- What makes you think this is a piece about **climate** change?
- What impact does climate change have on animals in the art?

25 min Making Comics

Make a three panel comic about the impacts of **climate change** on <u>an animal</u> using either **realism**, **abstraction**, or **surrealism** (or any combination of those) as a style. Be prepared to answer why you picked the style(s) you did.

5 min Wrap-up

Turn and talk with a neighbor:

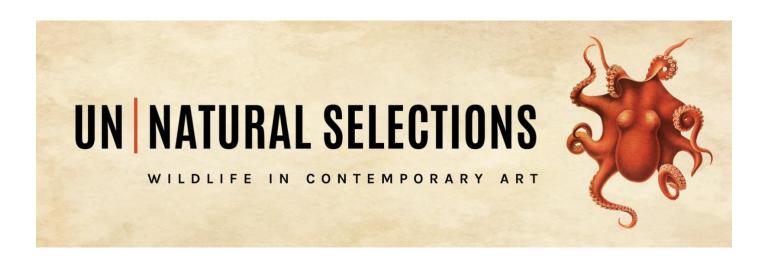
- What animal did you pick? What style?
- Why did you pick that animal and that style to talk about climate change?

Let's hear from two volunteers to share their work.

This activity shows us how artists use their art to tell stories about the environment and animals. Moving forward, think about how artists tell stories to teach us lessons about the environment and the dangers animals face due to environmental destruction. As you browse the exhibit, ask yourself what story the artist is trying to tell us.

3 min Flex Time





GRADE LEVELS: K-2

Key Objectives	Key Vocabulary
Students will be able to draw a one panel comic	Habitat
of a speaking animal in its natural habitat and	Endangered
articulate if the habitat is healthy or not and the	Extinct
impact it has on the animal.	

Artworks Used Materials

Constant Cycles Strung Together,

JenMarie Zeleznak

California, George Boorujy

The Singer Tract, John Buck

Student choice of art in Un/Natural Selections

Comic Template
Pencils (graphite, #2)
Printed questions (optional)

TIME	ACTIVITY	SCRIPT
2 min	Introduce Exhibit	Welcome to <i>Un/Natural Selections</i> . This exhibit is made up of work by contemporary artists (most of whom are still alive) about animals today and the challenges they face. Today, we are going to learn about those challenges and think about what the animals need to survive. Then, we're going to make comics about some of the animals you see here today.



5 min Introduce Comics + Art Analysis

A comic is a piece of art that usually has characters talking to each other. We can read the words the characters are saying or the thoughts they're thinking. Do any of you read comics? Do you know of any comics?

Look at *Constant Cycles Strung Togethe*r by JenMarie Zeleznak:

- Do you think the foxes are happy or sad? Why?
- •
- What do you think the fox is saying? Why?

10 min Group Art Analysis

A HABITAT is where an animal lives. A good habitat gives an animal the food, water, and shelter it needs to survive and have babies. Sometimes, when humans destroy an animal's habitat, they get sick and start to die. When there aren't many of an animal left, they're ENDANGERED. When all of that animal dies, they're EXTINCT.

Who can tell me any famous animals that went **extinct**? (If no child mentions dinosaurs, introduce it.)

Dinosaurs went **extinct** before humans even existed, but we still find their bones. Dinosaurs were also the great-great-great grandparents of birds.

Here are two pieces of art about birds. This is *California* by George Boorujy and *The Singer Tract* by John Buck. *California* shows a California Condor, and *The Singer Tract* shows an ivory-billed woodpecker. The condor is **endangered** because business and the government put too much pollution in the water, and it made the condor's egg shells too thin to hatch. The ivory-billed woodpecker is **extinct** because too much of its **habitat** was destroyed.

- Do you think the condor is happy or sad? Talk with a friend and discuss your answer.
- What about the woodpecker? Where in the art do you see its **habitat**? What's happening to its **habitat**? Let's discuss this as a group.
- What do you think the condor might say if it could talk?
 What about the woodpecker? Discuss this with a friend.



10 min	Scavenger Hunt	With a friend, find one work of art in the exhibit you like that shows an animal in its habitat .
		 What do you think animals need to be happy in their habitats? What might make them sad if they didn't have it?
		 Does the animal look happy or sad in its habitat? Use three words to describe the habitat.
15 min	Making Comics	Draw a comic panel of an animal you like saying something in its habitat. It can be an animal you like from the gallery or an animal you like that's not in the gallery. Show us in your picture if your animal is happy or sad in its habitat and show us why.
5 min	Wrap-up	Let's now have everyone turn and share your comic with a friend. Explain if the animal is happy or sad. Does it have a good habitat to live in?
		Now let's think together about what humans can do to help animals and keep their habitats healthy. What will happen to the animals if we keep their habitats safe and clean? Let's discuss

answers as a group.

